

VZCZCXRO1655
PP RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHIHL RUEHKUK
DE RUEHAK #1892/01 2060641
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 250641Z JUL 07
FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3112
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEHAK/USDAO ANKARA TU PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC//USDP:PDUSDP/ISA:EUR/ISA:NESA// PRIORITY
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEUITH/ODC ANKARA TU PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC//J-3/J-5// PRIORITY
RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK PRIORITY
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY
RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RHMFISS/425ABS IZMIR TU//CC// PRIORITY
RHMFISS/39ABG INCIRLIK AB TU PRIORITY
RUEPGAB/MNF-I C2X BAGHDAD IZ PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 001892

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/SE AND NEA/I

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/25/2017

TAGS: [PREL](#) [ENRG](#) [PGOV](#) [TU](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: TURKEY: ENGAGEMENT WITH IRAQ

Classified By: Ambassador Ross Wilson for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: The GOT is open to the possibility of the next ministerial meeting of Iraq's expanded neighbors process taking place in the first half of September, but believes it should be held in Istanbul as agreed to by participants in the first meeting at Sharm-el-Sheikh. Turkish MFA Iraq Coordinator Celikkol told Ambassador July 23 that he hopes to consult with USG officials on Iraq in the near future on the ministerial and other Iraq issues. The GOT is working on a visit to Turkey by PM Maliki. We heard subsequently that the Turks have proposed July 30. END SUMMARY

Neighbors Plus Ministerial

¶2. (C) Ambassador said that Washington is now interested in two next steps out of the Expanded Neighbors of Iraq exercise. One is to get a secretariat established soon. Notionally, it would be led by the UNSYG Special Representative for Iraq and would presumably be based in Baghdad. A second step is to hold another Expanded Neighbors ministerial meeting. Washington is interested in the first half of September, and there have been some discussions with the Iraqis about this. Iraqi FM Zebari had noted possible conflicting Arab League and Non-Aligned Movement events the first week of September. Celikkol said he would consult with his Minister but thought that timing could work for Turkey. However, Celikkol stressed the GOT's strong view that Turkey host the meeting in Istanbul, as agreed upon by all of the participants during the first ministerial held May 4 at Sharm el-Sheikh. Celikkol urged a decision soon on timing so the GOT has sufficient lead time to prepare the ministerial logistically and substantively.

¶3. (C) Celikkol, who plans to attend the July 26 meeting of the Neighbors process working group meeting on refugees, expressed frustration in coordinating with the Jordanians, as well as with the Syrians. He was not aware of the Syrians' August 2-3 dates for the meeting of the security working group in Damascus. On U.S. participation, he said the GOT has always supported USG involvement in all of the working group meetings, something for which Turkey would continue to press.

14. (C) Celikkol also raised the possibility of bringing in Iraqi Sunni groups to Istanbul around the period of the ministerial. If the goal is to reinforce reconciliation and new leadership power sharing, this would be a useful way to promote it, Celikkol suggested. Ambassador cautioned against anything that might look like a repeat of the post-Sharm meeting in Cairo that was seen as an anti-Maliki initiative by Baghdad. Celikkol agreed and said the GOT has no wish to undermine Maliki.

U.S.-Turkey Consultations

15. (C) Celikkol noted that if the aim is to hold a ministerial meeting by mid-September, USG and GOT officials should come together soon to discuss goals for the meeting. He invited Amb. Satterfield to visit Turkey at his earliest convenience and reiterated his earlier invitation to Amb. Crocker to stop through Turkey on one of his trips in or out of Iraq. Ambassador noted MFA U/S Apakan's plans for consultations in Washington with U/S Burns August 20 and indicated that should Celikkol be able to accompany Apakan, side meetings on Iraq could also be arranged.

USG Support for Kirkuk Referendum?

16. (C) Pointing to articles in the Turkish press alleging U.S. officials had said the referendum on final status of

ANKARA 00001892 002 OF 002

Kirkuk should go forward as planned for November 2007, Celikkol expressed concern and asked for clarification. Ambassador repeated earlier observations that a referendum in 2007 seems unlikely. Technical preparations have not been done. USG officials have been counseling Iraqi Kurdish leaders on the need for them to prepare Kurdish public opinion for a postponement. But Ambassador also cautioned that the less Turkey says about Kirkuk and its interest in postponing the referendum, the better. Celikkol noted that officials in Turkey have muted the issue, but that press stories about proceeding with a referendum do not help.

Maliki Visit to Turkey

17. (C) Celikkol noted PM Maliki had responded favorably to PM Erdogan's invitation to visit Turkey for meetings. Maliki had just proposed a July 27 visit in conjunction with his trip to Iran. Celikkol did not know whether this works for Turkey's leadership, as election campaigning had made them inaccessible. The Ambassador said he could not necessarily speak for Washington or Embassy Baghdad, but that he personally felt that the sooner such a meeting can take place, the better. Turkish PM/FM foreign affairs advisor Ahmet Davutoglu told Ambassador that the Maliki visit would "most likely" occur on July 30.

Visit Ankara's Classified Web Site at
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/ankara/>

WILSON